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Barn Party Ignites Signature Event Attended by 400+

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Barn Party Ignites

Signature Event Attended by 400+
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PHOTO BY AUTUMN GOODMAN



CELEBRATING AUTUMN

“The experience brought us all a little closer. My fellow Andrews students felt like family.”

P. 2



“VOTE, VOTE, VOTE!”

“For those here in Michigan who are registered, please do not forget to turn out next Tuesday. Skip class, skip your workout, skip dinner—it can wait. Participate in this historical moment.”

P. 5



AT LEAST I LOOK CUTE

“You may not be able to afford your medical bills after catching pneumonia, but what you can afford is fuzzy socks.”

P. 7



A WOMAN IN MINISTRY

“Instead I will battle privately on my knees, publically with my voice and every day through my love for each person I meet.”

P. 9



THE HORROR GENRE

“The idea that in a spiritual warfare for our souls, watching horror movies will further put us at risk seems simplistic.”

P. 11



LOSING FAITH IN THE CHURCH

“It’s hard to love this church when it doesn’t love me back.”

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News



Kara
Herrera
News Editor

The Barn Party: A Fall Favorite From Year to Year



PHOTOS BY AUTUMN GOODMAN

David Forner | As early as 7:15 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 27, up to four buses were loading up with students eager to attend another annual Barn Party. Sponsored every late October by the Andrews University Student Association (AUSA) and the Andrews University Graduate Student Association (AUGSA) at Babbott Farms & Greenhouse in Stevensville, Mich., the party invited students to spend a Saturday night celebrating the fall season with various fall-themed activities: corn mazes, mechanical bull rides, donut-on-a-string eating competitions, pumpkin-painting, free pizza and hot chocolate/apple cider and live music.

Jillian Imes (doctor of physical therapy, first year), who attended the event with friends who are both undergraduate and graduate Andrews University students, said, “The Barn Party is the best event that AUSA holds each year. The event always draws graduate students too.”

The biggest change from last year’s Barn Party was the introduction of live music—namely, a band composed of Meier Hall Student Dean Taylor Bartram (graduate,

young adult ministry) and band members Michael Thompson, Timothy Cincala and Sam Lewin (graduate, counseling psychology). Throughout the evening, the band covered a variety of recent pop hits—songs from alternative bands such as Imagine Dragons and Bastille.

Taking a break from the crowded barn to roast few marshmallows around a fire, Denae Keizs (senior, documentary film) said, “I really liked the live music because the band’s really good, and it give the whole Barn Party a nice feel. At Andrews, some events can be small, but the live music made our small town feel like a city.”

For many other students, the corn maze was the highlight of the Barn Party. Venturing into the corn maze in the dark, some used their phones as flashlights to follow the maps provided by Babbott Farms & Greenhouse staff; others were willing to brave the corn maze—and the chance of a student jumping out from the corn for an easy scare—without any lights.

Lauren Butler (freshman, biology, pre-medicine) said, “The corn maze was fun because it



was so dark. My friend jumped out at me like three times.”

While the corn maze included some 4 miles of twisting paths and dead-ends, some—like Kaitlyn Wasli (senior, business administration, pre-medicine) and her group of friends—appreciated exploring the maze without their maps.

“Our group’s experience corn maze was unsuccessful,” Wasli said. “We had twelve people in our group, and nobody was really interested in looking at the map, so we walked in and got lost, finally deciding to come back out. Some of the others we saw in the maze were really into

finding the maze checkpoints, and we weren’t, but we had a lot of fun anyways.”

As with years prior, the barn party also included a mechanical bull, and students looking for a chance to one-up their friends waited for their turns—most of which lasted no more than a few seconds each.

“I enjoyed seeing people fall from the bull,” Marco Jimenez (senior, international business, French for international trade) said. “There was this one guy that lasted a long while—at least twenty seconds—and that was really impressive. I would ride the bull, but I didn’t want to make

a fool of myself.”

Year after year, many students identify the Barn Party as their favorite AUSA event. As Ashley Neu, Andrews’ Director of Student Services & Involvement, estimated approximately 450 to 500 students attended the event. And near the end of the evening, some students—like Imes—lamented the event’s soon end.

“It’s a bit bittersweet for me this year because a lot of my friends are graduating after this year and moving on,” Imes said. “I made sure that as many of my friends could come tonight so we could enjoy this last Barn Party together.”

News

Pink Fashion Hits AU

Richla Sabuin |

Breast Cancer Awareness Day was held last Tuesday, Oct. 23. Students on campus were encouraged to wear pink to spread awareness of Breast Cancer.

For this event, the Graduate Student Association (GSA) teamed up with Andrews University Student Association (AUSA) along with the University Health and Wellness Center. AUSA president LJ Robinson (senior, elementary education) mentioned that, “October in general is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, so one of the GSA officers, Mary Gayen, thought that it would be good take the time to spread awareness. “So the AUSA officers contributed some prizes, such as pins and wristbands, for those who



PHOTO BY AUTUMN MEIS

wore pink on that day.

“I would say that the desired take away from this is that students will in general become aware of what breast cancer is, understand that it can affect both women and men, and learn how to self-ex-

amine via the pamphlets that were passed out,” said Robinson.

Tuma Gabasiane (freshman, pre-physical therapy) wore pink last Tuesday and received a pink wristband. When asked why she wore pink

on that day she said, “Because it was Breast Cancer Awareness Day, it is important to let other people know that other people get this cancer and it is something that women and men go through.” Tuma supports the cause

also because she personally knows people who got breast cancer and fought against it.

“My teacher had breast cancer and she fought it. Now she’s a mother of two children who are both in college. Also my old principal had breast cancer too. She had to change her diet and everything, but got through it. They both fought it, so anyone can fight it. You can do a self check (with a doctor) so you won’t be surprised when you find things out late,” Tuma continued. “It’s important for everyone to know, even children, because cancer does not know age or gender.”

Playgrounds, Pavilions and Pumpkin Painting

Moriah McDonald |

This past Friday on Oct. 26, students and families gathered at Five Pines Campground at 5:00 p.m. for an evening of food, fellowship and games, provided by Nutrition and Fitness Student Association (NFSA) and the Vegan Club. Activities included basketball, pumpkin painting, a playground and hayrides. The food was served under a pavilion, in addition to the pumpkin painting activities. Atop each table were colorful orange pumpkins, ready to be painted. An array of paints and paintbrushes were provided. A variety of foods were served, including potato and vegetable soup, bread and butter, fresh veggies and dip and hot apple cider.

Children littered the pavilion and field outside. Music played in the background over the steady hum of people talking

and laughing. Some students sat under the pavilion at picnic tables, while others stood in clusters, chattering excitedly. A student sat laughing with her friends as they ate apple cider doughnuts.

When asked about other food options, Abby Hart (freshman, nutrition) said, “There were several vegan options! I enjoyed the food, especially the doughnuts. I was also able to meet several people, including a junior who has the same major as I do. It was great to talk with her about classes and what to expect on my academic journey.” When asked how her experience was overall, Hart said, “I think there were a few issues such as room on hayrides and the amount of food because more people came than RSVPed, but overall the experience was positive.”

As the temperature dropped, several people

began to gather and take seats around the bonfire situated in an area enclosed by trees near the pavilion. Pumpkin painting ensued in the pavilion as people selected their pumpkins and paint colors. Two hay-filled wagons began to fill with people as the tractors geared up for the ride.

Lex Pena (biology, pre-medicine), a freshman who experienced the hayride, spoke about her experience, saying, “The hayride was pretty fun. I liked that they had hay instead of bales, it was really comfortable. It was a calming experience. I liked sitting with my friends and taking pictures of the scenery. The students that I met were friendly and asked my name and major and what my experience at Andrews has been like so far.” When asked about the highlight of the vespers, Pena stated, “I en-

joyed standing by the bonfire. Once again it was a chilly day, so I was grateful. The experience brought us all a little closer. My fellow Andrews students felt like family. I’m so glad to have attended! I hope to attend more events like these in the future. It was time well spent!”

The smell of acrylic paint soon began to fill the air. Paint brushes were held steady in the hands of their painters, some of which focused keenly on detailed designs, while others made large, bold swipes of color across their canvases. Pumpkins were transformed from their original orange coloring to different shades, some resembling the colors of fall seen in the location.

Regarding the specific location of the vespers, Aubrey Kibble (freshman, psychology) says, “I thought the location was

beautiful, and it wasn’t too far from campus. It was really fun to take pictures with the fall colors and the fire pit. My favorite part of Fall Fest Vespers was the hayride, because I’d never been on one before. It was a lot of fun! Especially when we were going over bumps. The food was so good, and there were a lot of activities to do. I would like to attend more events like this one.”

In conclusion, Fall Fest Vespers provided all who came with good, nutritional foods, fun fall-oriented activities and a positive fellowship experience for a Friday evening. Apple cider doughnuts were eaten, hayrides were taken and pumpkins were painted. Students in attendance hoped to attend an event such as this one next fall.

Ideas



Frentzen
Pakpahan
Ideas Editor

Discussion vs. Argument

Kelli Miller |

Have you ever been in class and had a discussion turn into a full blown argument, with both sides refusing to budge an inch? I certainly have. People leave annoyed and think much less of each other than before the class began. Usually, I find myself simply listening, and often notice that each side makes valid points. If they were willing to, they could use these points to build a bridge and perhaps create some sort of understanding rather than polarization. So, what is the root of this polarization, and what can we do to prevent our class discussions from turning into arguments that do no good?

This analysis I am

about to make is based on a class discussion I had last week. The professor opened the discussion by pleading with any pre-med majors to go into preventive healthcare after they earn their degree and specifically to try and search for causes of cancer. A worthy goal, we could all agree. Then he went on to suggest that the reason there are not more doctors working on causal/preventive research was because there is no money in it. If we cure the issue, no more need for chemo, surgery or other expensive medical treatments. This was his premise and point of view.

Now, there may be some truth to it, but there are also many other factors

that go into this issue. The problem was that the professor had now assigned a single motive to all those medical professionals who do not attempt to look at the preventive side of things: greed. Of course, those pre-med students in the class immediately took offense and spent the rest of the class period trying to salvage their characters from this unfairly assigned motive. So they came up with all the other reasons that a healthcare professional could choose not to go into preventive health that would not be greed driven. This was no longer a discussion. It was one side questioning the character of the other and the other defensively and desperately trying to salvage it.

For the sake of interest, here are a couple of the ideas the students came up with in response: the fact that cancer has many causes and there are many different kinds—it is not as simple as just finding the single cause and then the single cure. Another issue with preventive medicine is that it is basically lifestyle medicine. It would require potential patients to completely reverse their bad habits and change their lives. This is incredibly difficult as lifestyle changes take a great amount of effort from the individual that they are often not willing to make.

As I listened, I realized that it this simple: both sides had some correct points. Yes, there is probably some commercialism

and greed going on, medicine is a business after all, but there are also medical researchers and health care professionals genuinely trying to help as many people as possible. Perhaps bringing up the question, “How can we find funding for medical research?”, would have been a better way to bring up the money side of the issue. A conversation becomes a fruitless argument when one side (or both) feel that their character is being attacked.

“What society, what media doesn’t tell us is that most of life is lived between dreams, doing normal, everyday, life-y stuff.”

Living With Eyes Wide Open

Caitlin Jankiewicz |

We’re told to dream, encouraged even. We’re told that if our dreams don’t scare us, they aren’t big enough. We’re told to chase our dreams and make them come true. We’re told that dreams are what matter about life, and that life isn’t full and complete if they don’t come true. And so, we dream, about the past, about the future.

We ache for times gone by, see our life as “time elapsed” since a particular event or time period. We suffer angst over the future, focused on what is yet to come and feel that

our lives are on hold or empty until it happens. We think that we’ll be happy when we finally get that degree, find our dream guy or girl and get married, have kids or move to our dream home, we score the perfect job and career. And we wait—we put off being happy and content until these things happen.

But while we do so, our life slowly slips past. What society, what media doesn’t tell us is that most of life is lived between dreams, doing normal, everyday, life-y stuff. Maybe life itself is a dream come true, maybe the fact that we are think-

ing and breathing, learning, growing, living is the real dream. We think that we’ll be happy once our dreams come true, but the thing with dreams is, as soon as they come true we find new ones.

Recently, I asked myself, “if I was assured that when I was 26, every single one of my dreams would come true, what would I change about how I am living now, at 19?” I immediately started listing things: I’d stop worrying. I’d fill my time with things that I loved doing. I’d spend time with my friends, my family. I’d learn new things and

push myself to do things I was scared to do, I’d... I’d... and then it hit me. Why am I not doing those things now? J.K Rowling, once said “It does not do well to dwell on dreams and forget to live.” I realized that I’ve been clinging to dreams lost to the past or not yet found in the future, and I’ve been forgetting to live. My life now isn’t “on intermission” just because the dreams I have for the future haven’t come true yet. Having dreams is great, and having them come true is beautiful, but that’s not what all of life is about.

That being said, don’t give up on what you dream about. In the end, our dreams are part of what make us who we are, and we should run towards them. However, we should remember not to run so fast that we miss the journey along the way. Like Rowling says, if we focus only on our dreams and whether or not they’re coming true, we will forget to live, and miss what could have been an incredible life if we had just stopped to notice.

Midterm Madness

Daniel Self |

Midterm elections historically entail a realignment of Congress in the middle of a presidential administration. In this particular cycle, this trend seems to be continuing. FiveThirtyEight's current prediction suggests an 85% chance that Democrats will take control of the House of Representatives, while giving 5 in 6 odds that Republicans maintain control over the Senate. While these are only predictions, it provides an insight into the ideological perspectives of voters after two years under President Trump. However, in several states, close races in certain Senate elections remain a reason to get out and vote. Only about 61% of eligible Americans vote in presidential elections, with a significantly smaller demographic voting in midterms. The democratic process can only serve the interests that represent themselves, which in America happens to be less than two-thirds of the population.

While voting may seem unimpactful at times, (as well as an obvious personal inconvenience),

the singular votes that are placed do impact national political issues. Moreover, one should definitely vote if it can have a tangible impact on an issue they are concerned with, or likewise, in a Republican system, voting for a representative whose concerns align with your own. While at times one may feel a disconnect between their vote and actual change, it remains the baseline for political activism. Most importantly, one must understand the value of their vote. Most districts for the House of Representatives will have around 275,000 votes cast on election night. But for states forecasted to be within one or two percentage points, a few thousand cast votes change the entire result for that particular district. The House of Representatives, having a strong Republican holding, actually only needs 23 flipped districts to regain a democratic majority. In this way, the value of new or realigning voters remains immense, as around 35,000 individuals' strategic choice to vote a certain direction could change the land-

scape of Congress. While largely theoretical, these numbers provide a ballpark to understand the potential significance and value of new voters.

However, a continual battle remains in determining which districts voters must emerge from in order to get the most results. Clearly, votes matter immensely more in states with low voter turnout or close polling data. In the Michigan 7th and 8th, for example, the two districts are very narrowly separated in the polls and could serve as seats which flip for the Democratic party. Likewise the Ohio 12th's polling consistently suggests only a two percent gap between leading Republican incumbent Troy Balderson and his Democratic rival Danny O'Connor. These individual cases of close Senatorial or House races occur across the nation, and whether one can access the voting booth personally or mail in a ballot, these particular votes hold greater significance.

The House of Representatives, the arm of Congress where bills are created, provides the Ma-

jority Leader the opportunity to determine what issues the Senate votes on. Moreover, with the Senate likely remaining Republican and the Trump administration entrenching itself further, a split Congress will inevitably weaken the Republican party's ability to create legislation. Moreover, the Democratic Party can begin to slow down President Trump's policies and dictate Congress' direction until the next presidential election—particularly, reversing or preventing scandals such as the un-vetted appointment of his son-in-law for a critical nation security role. Robert Mueller's investigation can continue with new vigor, probing deeper into the president's taxes and financial history. Of course, with the House's power to initiate impeachment, the results could be as dramatic. Thus, while your individual vote may not feel directly connected immediate political change, applying pressure to certain areas may warrant the results desired for a fair and safe America.

From the Editor:

Generally, voter apathy has marked midterm elections, but this year I strongly urge you to exercise your constitutional right and privilege and vote. Even though in recent days violence and hatred have replaced civil discourse and cooperation, I continue to believe that we as a people are stronger than this. In Michigan it is too late to register to vote, but there may still be a chance to vote as an absentee in your home state. For those who are registered, please do not forget to turn out next Tuesday. Skip class, skip your workout, skip dinner—it can wait. Participate in this historical moment.

See <https://www.vote.org/voter-registration-deadlines/> for more information. Also see https://www.eac.gov/assets/1/6/Federal_Voter_Registration_ENG.pdf under "State Instructions".

“While at times one may feel a disconnect between their vote and actual change, it remains the baseline for political activism.”



PHOTO FROM PUBLIC DOMAIN

Pulse



Apryl
Briley
Pulse Editor

Essential Oils

Apryl Briley |

Essential oils are a necessity in my everyday life. I started really using them this past summer and let me tell you, it has been life changing. I don't know what I would do if I didn't have my oils. The brand of essential oils that I use is Young Living. Young Living is a worldwide community of essential oil lovers all working toward one goal: having a healthier lifestyle. Many of the everyday necessities that you use are filled with toxins that are not good for your body. Young Living oils are 100% pure oil "extracted through careful steam distillation, resin tapping and cold pressing, the purest essential oils are far more powerful than the botanicals from



PHOTO BY APRYL BRILEY

which they come" (Young Living Website). The purity and potency of these oils is what makes them so effective. Young Living has hundreds of different oils for emotional well being, combating sickness, relieving stress and anxiety, making the

air smell good and even a plethora for body, household and pet care.

Here are a few oils that I highly recommend for college students:

Valor: Young Living calls Valor liquid courage. This

oil is especially helpful when you are having high anxiety. Its sweet citrus scent helps calm nerves and clear your mind. I apply this oil to my wrists and over my heart daily for emotional support.

Thieves: Thieves is a mix of cinnamon, clove, eucalyptus and many more bacteria fighting oils. It is great for congestion, pain relief, oral health and anti-acne. This oil is perfect for this time of the year when sickness is high and flying through everyone.

Lavender, Lime and Peppermint: This simple blend is perfect to diffuse when you are getting ready for bed, or even while you are studying. It has a calming flowery scent that fills the room.

My roommate and I diffuse this blend almost every night to help us sleep.

Stress Away: As a college student, this oil is my life saver. It is a blend of multiple different oils such as Balsam, Lime, Vanilla and Lavender. When feeling particularly stressed I rub it on my temples and the back of my neck for relief.

"I have an oil for that" has become something I find myself saying very regularly. When my friends are sick, exhausted or just need a pick-me-up, I slide in with any oil that I have to help. As we move through to the end of the semester consider trying essential oils. You won't regret it.

"Young Living has hundreds of different oils for emotional well being, combating sickness, relieving stress and anxiety, making the air smell good and even a plethora for body, household and pet care."

Eating Healthier 101



PHOTO BY SIERRA COOK

Dani Maletin |

As someone who has a chronic obsession with sugar, it is extremely ironic that I am the one to write this article. However, choosing to eat healthy on this campus is actually relatively easy, and sim-

ply requires dedication and a balanced diet. If you want to live a healthier lifestyle, now is the time to start. There are an infinite number of benefits from choosing healthy, nutrition-filled food, so take the challenge to be-

come a better you. First things first: the majority of the time, the cafeteria is going to have healthier options for you than the Gazebo, simply because you can construct a lot of your own food and limit the amounts you choose to grab. That being said, the cafeteria is also a large temptation due to all the ice cream, desserts, pizza and chips that always seem to be lying around. Make sure to set limits for yourself, whether based on calories, fullness, sugar intake or protein consumption, you should have a measure of what you deem as healthy.

Some healthy choices you could make are:

Omelets: There are so many ways to make these healthier. You can choose to eat it without the

cheese, to get egg whites so you are eating less fat, or ask for the vegan option which is simply getting grilled veggies.

Salads: Most people assume that salads are healthy, and therefore never take precautions with what they put on it. However, it is very easy to turn something healthy into something not by piling on the dressing, croutons, bacon bits and cheese. Rather, try to make your own dressing with oil and lemon juice, or try to just limit the amount you put in comparison to all the vegetables.

Line items: Obviously the cafeteria changes these on a daily basis, but I would say get into the habit of always asking for the vegetables, and trying to limit how much you get

of the main serving. Often times, the vegan option will have less fat.

Pizza: While these are already pre-made, I would suggest choosing the smaller slices to limit yourself, or even decide to eat the vegan option which is made with wheat flour and all vegetables instead of cheese.

I think students tend to gorge themselves when they eat at the cafeteria because they're always trying to get their money's worth, but we're actually hurting our bodies by overeating. Try to eat smart instead, and choose to be a healthier version of you.

Social Media: How to be Professional Online

Vanessa Angel | Social media includes an umbrella of applications including Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and Snapchat. But people don't normally associate social media with professionalism. In fact, social media tends to be an atmosphere where we can express freely how we feel, encompassing our goofy side as well. The reality is that sometimes social media can prevent someone from getting a job. On Oct. 24, in the "Grown" program (Living Learning Center in Lamson Hall), Kate Carbaugh gave a talk about how to be professional online. In this session of "Grown", she gave tips on what to do and what not to do online.

Mistakes: What Not To Do

First, do not share your latest job offer online. Carbaugh talked about

not sharing your job information online with others. One reason why you shouldn't share any news of your "big promotion," or "great job offer" is because in the end, nothing is guaranteed. The job could go to anyone or the job may not last forever.

Secondly, do not plagiarize: plagiarism is never acceptable. We all learned that plagiarism is not acceptable in school. But the reality is plagiarism is not acceptable anywhere you go, and social media is not an exception. Whether writing a comment on someone's post or just writing a thought on Facebook, proper credit and source should be given to a person when needed.

Success: What To Do Online

Clean social media: Carbaugh talks about the benefits of having a clean and up to date social me-

dia environment. Potential employers who look at your social media accounts want you to be up to date and have a social media atmosphere that describes who you are. In other words, having a picture about alcohol and drinking will not look presentable. Instead, one should have social media that is presentable to future employees.

Commit to your online status: Kate also made some really good points on privacy settings and social media. She stated that it is important to have a social media account that is not set on private when looking for a job because a potential employer might see a privacy setting as hiding something. Kate said that if you want to have a private account, have two distinct accounts, one for your professional workplace and another for your personal life. Knowing

when to have your accounts on private is important when trying to get a job because you want your account to reflect your character. Your true character should never be hidden.

Social media and your professional life don't normally coincide, but when they do, it's important to know what is acceptable and what is not. It's important not to be arrogant when big promotions seem to be in your grasp because nothing is final. In addition, it's important not to plagiarize under any circumstances online. Finally, it is important to clean your social media so that it looks presentable and separate, if necessary, from your personal life. Social media is more than just one aspect of your life—it can affect your future.

12 Steps to Managing Mid-Semester Blues

Counseling and Testing Center |

The semester is over halfway through and some of you are probably weary, concerned about your grades, worried about life after Andrews, or all three. Here are some tips to help you get through the mid-semester blues and finish strong:

1. Make a priority list and stick to it. Work on completing tasks with the earliest due dates and work your way down. Tasks often seem less overwhelming when you write them down as opposed to mulling over them. Engaging a structured approach helps you see those tasks as being more doable.
2. Take frequent breaks during your study time. Scheduling 10 to 15 minute breaks after about every 1 hour study time can help you stay alert and motivated.
3. Contact Student Success at 269-471-6096 or stop by their office in Nethery Hall 210 to see about getting a tutor if you are struggling in any of your classes and need added support.
4. Study groups can be helpful for some people who feel unmotivated when they study alone. Connect with your friends or classmates and plan study dates.
5. Watch what you eat. People who follow a diet that is rich in fruits and vegetables tend to feel sharper and exhibit less depressive symptoms.
6. Focus on your own goals and run your own race. Do not compare yourself with others or become distracted by how well your peers seem to be doing. Remember that your college experience is part of your journey toward becoming the best version of yourself—not the best version of someone else.
7. Schedule time for play. Play time helps you reset and recharge.
8. Don't hesitate to reach out to your professors. It is better to go have that conversation with them now while there is still time to improve your grade than to wait until the semester is almost done.
9. Reach out to your support system. Talk to them about how you feel.
10. Remind yourself that although it may have seemed rough or impossible at the time, you got through last semester. This means you probably have more grit and stick-to-itiveness than you credit yourself for. Have courage.
11. Remember that your grade is not the sum total of who you are as a person. There is much more in you than what might be reflected in a class grade.
12. If you are experiencing symptoms of depression, anxiety or any other mental health concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to one of your friendly and confidential counselors at the Counseling & Testing center, Bell Hall 123. Services are free to AU students; we are here to help you stay well and succeed!

In Season, Out of Style

Cristen Williams |

The fall season has arrived and with it howling winds, brief hail storms and 40-degree weather. Yes, temperatures have dropped to what may seem like a cooling wind to some the unbearable ice to others. Is the latter braving the cold? Barely.

Personally, I am still trying to show off my fits from summer while the weather lets me; however, in fall, no matter how warm it may seem I guarantee the slightest wind will make it drop 10 degrees. There have been too many instances of me leaving Lamson shaking and then making an about face back to my dorm room for an outfit change. Despite my struggles with the cold, some things are harder to let go of than others. My favorite fall outfit is a bulky sweater, knee high socks and a skirt. I, for one, love skirts and will freeze to death in the name of fashion.

I asked others how they were braving the cold:



PHOTO BY HTEEMU DEE

"It's not cold to me. I wear short sleeves or long sleeves with nothing under it. When it gets colder I will keep warm with light sweaters." -Wesley Marcellus (Freshman, Computer Science)

"Leggings, sweaters, a coat and boots. Regular boots not winter boots. It depends on the day." -Juriel Boyce (Freshman, Animal Science)

"I layer with a sweater jacket and infinity scarf combo. Thick sweat pants for the windy days" -Tonica Young (Freshman, Biology)

For those who have not yet received their winter clothes in the mail and are wondering if attending classes is worth it in such cold weather, it is. Walmart sells ther-

mal tops and bottoms for about \$10. Also, tea and other hot beverages are offered in various departments on campus. Remember to dress warm. You may not be able to afford your medical bills after catching pneumonia, but what you can afford is fuzzy socks. Let's be out of style in this fall season!

Humans



Adriana
Santana
Humans Editor

AU Around the World



PROVIDED BY KAZUMI HIRATA

Kazumi Hirata
Junior
Psychology
Interviewed by Rachel
Arner

Where are you from?

I'm from Japan (Kyoto prefecture), and came to Andrews University around the age of 19.

Do you ever get homesick during the holiday season?

No, because I have so many things to do in America during this time of year. I usually get homesick during regular school days when nothing special is happening. But if I am busy with school

work or super stressed I don't remember that I'm feeling homesick. The biggest thing I miss about being home for the holidays is the food. It is so good!

Do you have any suggestions for helping those who may be feeling homesick during the holidays?

I would say to just listen to us when we share with you about how we're feeling. We don't get to talk about our homesickness often, and if we feel comfortable enough to share with you please don't judge. Because it's a legitimate struggle. You might not be able to relate, but just the fact that you take the time to listen means so much to us. It takes a lot for us to try to adapt to a new environment so we appreciate those who take the time to ask us how we're doing.

Since being here in America, have you been influenced to change your holiday traditions?

Yes! Before coming to America, I never sent anyone holiday cards. I didn't realize it was something that people

did. But now I love sending my friends and family cute holiday cards. It's actually a pretty fun pastime!

What do you miss doing at home during the holidays while being here?

Honestly, I just miss being lazy in a warm blanket table during winter time with my mother's best dishes of food. There's a table we use called Kotatu that sits on top of a blanket while we eat that keeps us warm. And I miss it so much because Michigan is so cold! This type of table is a part of tradition during the new year. I also miss writing New Year letters to my friends, because that was one of my hobbies during the holidays.

What is your favorite thing to do during the holidays while in the U.S.?

My favorite thing about the holidays in the U.S. is Thanksgiving dinner, the warmth of Christmas and Black Friday on Thanksgiving break. I have been invited by different families during those holidays in the U.S. and each one of those experiences were exciting. I felt

like I was experiencing the "real" stuff. Because we don't really celebrate Christmas in Japan (it's more about eating cake and having a party) we try to import that custom but without thinking about the deep meaning behind them. Sometimes people just do it because those customs are thought of as being cool. We do, however, celebrate the New Year. It's the day that all my family gathers together and eat specific dishes celebrating the next year coming! That is something like a mixture of Christmas and Thanksgiving for us.

What year is this for you at Andrews?

This is my third year so I think I am a junior now! I didn't know freshman, sophomore or those terms until I came to the U.S. so I am still learning every new term.

What do you plan on doing when you graduate?

It is very hard to explain this... I already have a job, being an actress. I joined this acting agency last summer break and one of the reasons why I chose this company is be-

cause they said that they would be willing to wait until I graduated from Andrews. I think that no matter what job a person may have, an education is a crucial and fundamental thing. Plus anything can happen, so I'm letting God lead my way and if he asks for another way I will follow that.

What helpful tips do you have for students who are struggling with homesickness while in school? not just holidays?

Ask for help! There are so many opportunities for you to ask for help and until you ask for it your professors might not realize that you need it. For example, friends, professors and RAs are great resources, or you can utilize facilities like the Counseling & Testing Center. You could also call your parents and friends in your hometown. Even just talking to them might help with the stress or homesickness. Lastly, it's very important to ask God for help, because he will provide everything you need.

It's Time

Adriana Santana |

I feel like I should start off by saying that I have been Adventist for the past 20 years of my life, and I don't plan on being a part of any other denomination or religion. That being said there have been many moments where my love for this church and Adventism in general has left me, and anger just took its place. Of course you may be thinking I'm just going to talk about ordination, and even though I could talk about how unjust I think it is, that's not what has made loving Adventism hard for me at times. What's made loving this church hard is the lack of connection it can have on young adults, people of different races and the disconnect it can have on the world itself.

Growing up Adventist I experienced all the

typical activities like Adventurers and Pathfinders but after coming back home from college I realized that there isn't much left for me in this church. I'm too old for camporees, but I feel too young when sitting in an adult sabbath school. Luckily I'm at Andrews for nine months out of the year, but after my sister graduated she talked about being in an awkward in-between and I'm afraid that that will be my fate as well. As if the excitement I feel about my spirituality and church will end up fading out and it will be solely up to me to revive it. And yes on some level I believe your faith is what you make it, but when there aren't really opportunities for young adults to thrive in a local church it makes it harder.

Moreover, in terms of

being a minority in this church, there are so many things I could speak on: the segregation of conferences, the bias towards contemporary music services (neglecting gospel or other cultural forms of worship) and the never-ending fight to make the officials of this church diverse. Yet the one of the biggest things I can't get over is just not being looked at the same. In order to avoid putting the conference I was formerly a part of on blast I won't say its name, but I remember always feeling different. And I'm not saying I felt that from everyone in the conference, but a good amount of people would stare at my family as if the "but where are you from, from" question was on the tip of their tongue. When I was younger I never noticed, but

when you grow and realize the differences between you and someone else, it's hard to swallow. This place I grew up in, a place where Christianity should be the one thing that brings me close, yet still makes me feel alone.

Lastly, when I speak about the disconnect we have on the world I'm referring to our lack of activism in the church. Yes, I know as Christians we should be in the world and not of it but I can't help but feel unsettled when we, as a church, don't take a stance on social justice issues. Nine times out of ten those issues are affecting someone in the church, but we don't bat an eye. And yes, I know there is only so much we can do since we as Adventists don't really involve ourselves into politics, but I fear we are neglecting the hurt

of so many people in our church and should really try to help them. I'm not saying we have to run the streets protesting, but at least acknowledge these social issues that are happening and show that we empathize with them. I feel like we are so used to turning the other way that we forget people have been knocked down.

Again, I think Adventism is overall the religion for me, but I can't lie and say I'm not tired. I can't lie and say that we are great just as we are because we're not. We need to progress, it's time for us to progress, and I firmly believe we owe it to ourselves to do so. Do I think everything can be changed to the way I want it to be? Probably not, but I do think as Christians it is our duty to try.

Humans

Hide of Rhino



PROVIDED BY NATALIE DORLAND

Natalie Dorland |

A wise pastor once told me I'd need three things to survive pastoral ministry: the mind of a theologian, the heart of a child and the hide of a rhino.

As a female pastor, I can attest to how important having really thick skin is in this job.

I can tell the question you're about to ask. You glance down at your feet, a sheepish smile curling up one side of your mouth, usually a stuttering voice follows. After letting you stumble through a few awkward phrases I'll just say it for you:

"You want to ask my opinion on women's ordination, don't you? And you'd like to know what my experience as a female pastor has been like, correct?"

It's okay, feel free to ask, I don't mind! I've answered the question hundreds of different ways, answers depending on the demographic and religious background of the person asking. I always play it safe; I prefer to make friends rather than enemies. But my ultimate answer is this: ordination is unbiblical. For those here at AU, go talk to Professor Darius Jankiewicz about it if you'd like the Biblical and historical proof. While believing this, I still maintain a strong belief in equality, cultural diversity in religion and wish that the General Conference (GC) Session delegates in 2015 had voted to allow divisions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church around the world to make their own decision whether or not to ordain women in their own division.

I was in Kusadasi, Turkey during that summer of 2015. We were near ancient Ephesus, scheduled to tour there the day after the GC 2015 vote. I had spent the evening before praying desperately to God along the Mediterranean sea shore. I knew the vote probably wouldn't pass, but I prayed

anyway. He reassured me, reaffirmed my calling to pastoral ministry and once again impressed upon me that he would carry me through this trial. I woke up the next morning and walked through the area our tour group was having breakfast, all eyes on me. Silence reigned that day, we were disappointed, I was hurt, no one knew what to say. Professor Carl Cosaert, of Walla Walla University, was encouraging and spoke of how Priscilla functioned like a pastor in the church in Ephesus in the New Testament. He strongly reminded us of God's calling to women to function as church leaders in the Bible. That evening some other male theology students took me back to the sea shore and prayed over me, each of them taking the time to affirm ways they had seen the Holy Spirit use my ministry. They "ordained" me in their own way, encouraging me to not give up on God's call on my life. Six months later I began working as a pastor in the greater Seattle area, one of the top 10 post-Christian areas of the United States. (<https://www.barna.com/research/post-christian-cities-america-2017/>)

"Do not become bitter." That's one of my top rules as a female pastor. I have met so many women who have been dragged through the mud of ministry (yes, that's how it feels at times), and come out the other side angry and bitter at the situations and people that have made them struggle. Yet God has called me to love everyone, and that includes those who are against me. I want to defy the odds and not become a bitter female pastor, "angry at the patriarchy for what it has done to me." The struggles of being a female in a spiritually male dominated career, the people who tell me I can't do this job because the Bible says so—these are not my enemies. The devil is. And if there is one thing I know for certain, it is that I will not yield to the temptation he throws at me to become bitter towards those who tell me I can't do this job. Instead I will battle privately on my knees, publically with my voice and every day through my love for each person I meet.

As a female pastor, finding a man who is willing to follow your career is rare. Some of my previous dating relationships ended because the guy couldn't handle the fact that I was going to be a pastor. The types of men that strong women attract are interesting—some of them are great; others have hidden dangerous qualities. And I struggled for a long time in an abusive relationship I should have left far sooner because I was afraid I'd never find another guy who would support my ministry like he did. I never thought I'd be able to find a guy again who was fine with me being a female in ministry, who helped my career in any way he could and who loved my love for God and supported my call to care for his people. (Side note to those in a relationship: if you think you're in an emotionally, verbally, physically, spiritually, mentally or otherwise abusive relationship of any kind please know you can contact me. I won't judge you for what you've been through and I'm here to help.)

Being a woman in ministry is difficult because you are constantly analyzed. Imagine living in a glass cage, while people poke and prod at you, wondering what you'll do and

how you'll respond. Will you lash out and prove them right in their belief that women pastors are a trick from the devil? Will you try to seduce them with your sinful womanly ways? Will you brainwash their children into believing your lies?

Pastors are already put on a pedestal in how they are viewed and treated by church members. People expect a lot of their pastors, often forgetting how human we are, that we enjoy the fun moments of life like everyone else. The only difference is the career we've chosen. Yet we are constantly criticized for it. One of my constant struggles at the beginning of my ministry was what to wear to work each day. I wanted to be both professional and comfortable, stylish and yet appropriate, attractive but not too flashy. Every Sabbath someone would comment on my outfit; sometimes older men liked it way too much, causing me to never wear certain outfits again. Other times people were upset I wore pants, or disliked how I did my hair. You name it, someone has probably said it to me.

The church I pastored was on a whole extremely supportive of me as a woman in ministry. Many people were curious about me, wondering what a woman pastor was like, and were a bit awkward around me at first. I didn't have too many people who got in my face about women's ordination. But I did have a few people tell me they didn't believe women should be pastors. Ironically, just before I ended my time at that church to come to AU for my Master's degree, each of the people who told me that separately came to me and said that through being ministered to by me, through hearing my sermons and witnessing God use a woman as a pastor, they each said their minds had been changed. God had convicted their hearts and they now understood why we need female pastors and believed God has called women to be leaders in ministry. I was humbled because I had never tried to argue with these individuals or show them why I biblically believed women are called to be in ministry. Instead I ministered to them, befriended them, loved them and asked God to do the rest. And he did!

So while I am saddened by the recent Annual Council vote, and the 2015 GC vote, as well as the general sentiment against women in the Adventist church worldwide, I know my calling is from God. I am not doing this for human approval, nor to prove I can make it in a man's world. I'm doing this because God has asked me to show people His love. And there's no place I'd rather be than exactly where God has placed me. In undergrad this is the prayer I always prayed: "God, open the doors and I will walk through. Close the doors and I will walk away." That prayer has produced miracles, and God never ceases to amaze me. So until he closes the door on ministry, I'm walking forward confidently, as a female pastor, unafraid of what may come and choosing not to become bitter from the stones thrown my way.



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Arts & Entertainment



Megan
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Pianist Kate Boyd Performs and Informs on Howard Stage



PHOTO FROM IMC

David Dunham |

On Sunday, Oct. 28, the Howard Performing Arts Center had the pleasure of hosting Kate Boyd, a renowned pianist in its auditorium. Boyd is an educator who has taught at many a prestigious university, as well as a performer who has released two CDs with over 100,000 downloads to date, and as she walked

out onto the stage in a reflective white dress (after Labor Day much less), the audience was poised to engage in a spectacular recital. And spectacular it was. All of the movements performed were artfully perfected, with each one bringing a new sense of professionalism.

As the movements of Schubert gave way to Chopin, they brought

with them an air of peacefulness, with a good number of the audience closing their eyes to feel the sensations that the music presented. The flow of each piece, with their somber, repetitive movements, tempted sleep.

The trance of tranquility was eventually broken in the final piece, Sonata No. 6 in A Major, Op. 28 by Sergei Prokofiev, which was presented as an ode to war, and with it came a far more focused and driven sound than had been displayed in the previous movements. Before the piece, Boyd forewarned the audience that there would be banging on the piano, and delivered on the promise on both the keys as well as the physical body of the piano. It was quite the change in atmosphere, but served her well, as it ensured that the concert

hall was alive for her final act, which is where Boyd was able to fully shine.

In the end, what stood out about Boyd's performance wasn't the music she played (albeit amazing music), but the education that she brought to the audience. Before many of the pieces performed, she gave the audience a background on where the piece was from or what made the piece stand out in her eyes. For one piece in particular, the Sonata for Piano, Op. 1 by Alban Berg, she played a few of the recurring musical themes before she began, and explained their significance and meaning, to ensure that the audience could fully devour this musical feast. Her chops as an educator took what could have been a very standard recital to something of a learning experience for the audience, and that

made all the difference.

As an additional educational service, after the concert Professor Boyd stayed on for another hour and a half of masterclass, artfully coaching four Andrews Piano Performance majors with ideas about how they could improve their performances. This included suggestions on items ranging from posture and the proper distance from the piano to allow for ergonomic arm movement to breaking down the musical line into a series of "gestures" as part of creating a clear dramatic concept for interpreting the piece in question.

How (Not) to Portray Domestic Violence in Movies

Adair Kibble |

The development of film and the rise of Hollywood as a mainstream cultural force in Western media has many effects on society. However, in the year that the #MeToo movement called attention to widespread occurrences of sexual harassment and abuse, and at the end of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, the subject of domestic abuse and domestic violence portrayed on film seems especially pertinent. Although women are not always the victims and men are not always the aggressors in instances of domestic violence, this is the most common form of domestic violence and thus the form more often portrayed on film. For example, according to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence website, out of the 72% of murder-suicides that involve a romantic partner, 94% of the victims of these murder-suicides are female. Also, one in four women versus one in seven men have been victims of severe physical violence by

a romantic partner, and one in seven women have been stalked to the point of fearing for their safety compared to one in seventeen men.

On the issue of violence against women in film, advocates for women have brought up a number of issues. Since 1984, when the New York Times published the article, "Violence Against Women in Films," noting a disturbing upward trend of movies depicting violence against women, increasing from one film in 20 in 1982 to one in eight by 1983, questions about how including violence against women in blockbusters affects American culture by justifying, encouraging or even romanticizing violence. That same Times article cited a study by the American Psychological Association that found that violence was a sexual stimulant for a 30 percent of researchers, an alarming discovery in a culture increasingly bombarded with scenes of violence against women in film. The article noted that slasher horror movies in particular, such as

Friday the 13th (1980) and The Texas Chainsaw Massacre (1974), had been found to influence male and female viewers to develop an indifferent attitude towards violence against women after repeated viewings. And regarding women in abusive relationships, in the 1999 article, "Beauty and the beast: The romanticization of abuse in popular culture," Laura Bères argues that many films that portray abusive relationships in a romantic light, portraying unrealistic scenarios where the heroines are able to redeem or change their abusers, such as Disney's Beauty and the Beast (1991) or, more recently, the Fifty Shades series, can encourage women in abusive relationships to stay in them, holding onto a false hope displayed in popular narrative and keeping themselves in danger.

Films conceived specifically to bring light to the problem of domestic violence have come under fire for their content as well as their impact on viewers. The actress Jessica Chastain criticized

the director Quentin Tarantino, notorious for gratuitous violence against women in his films, for his film Kill Bill (2003), which, like other films such as The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo (2011) and Enough (2002), uses domestic violence as a "phoenix" moment, or an inciting incident that leads to an important transformation of character that allows the female lead to self-actualize and become stronger. This is problematic because insinuating abuse is an important part of character growth and strength obscures the harsh reality that abuse is a harmful act that destroys a woman's sense of self and derails her life. In addition, those films also feature women acting all on their own for revenge, taking on the entire burden themselves, which is a major discouragement for women in real life facing problems of domestic abuse. These films destroy any hope for getting help from women's shelters, domestic violence hotlines or law enforcement in service of a more exciting plot. Another as-

pect of a "thriller" is that it usually leads quite unrealistically to a confrontation between a woman and her abuser in which the woman triumphs over him, instead of being seriously injured or killed, which is the result in the overwhelming majority of cases. Finally, the issue of how graphically instances of violence and rape are shown again brings up the broader debate of if showing violence against women on screen desensitizes and normalizes viewers to violence against women instead of discouraging it. Hopefully, in the wake of the #MeToo movement, portrayals of domestic violence against women will be re-examined and changed to better represent the struggles of domestic violence victims and affect a shift away from treating such serious topics flippantly, without regard for Hollywood's influence on dynamics between men and women off-screen.

Arts & Entertainment

Reexamining the Horror Genre

Natalie Hwang |

The horror film genre encompasses a variety of subcategories targeting specific audiences with their focuses on psychological thrill (Silence of the Lambs, 1991), surrealism (Eraserhead, 1997), religion (Ouija, 2014), supernatural creatures (Bram Stoker's Dracula, 1992), the body (Raw, 2016), crime (American Psycho, 2017) and paranormal activity (It, 2017), among many other subjects. However, despite this diversity in the genre, horror is often overlooked by awards, and many people believe that they remain a source of cheap, unintellectual entertainment. Horror's frequent portrayals of the occult, supernatural elements and religious figures also estranges most horror films from spaces of faith. But I believe that this particular perspective shuts people off from an incredibly thoughtful branch of cinema that predominantly aims to create art through portrayals of different issues that intersect with many people's lives.

Most arguments against horror films made by people of faith stem from a distaste for the ways in which horror interacts

with religious themes and the occult, supernatural and paranormal. Horror tends to reduce religious beliefs and rites into a palatable version of whatever denomination represented, as in The Omen (1976). This particular movie, like many other horror films, elaborates on a singular provocative concept in Christianity. Focusing on the Antichrist, The Omen does not represent Christianity so much as exemplify a purely propagandic work aiming to evangelize to its audience. Christianity as employed in horror often simply presents an easy opposing or moralizing force to whatever supernatural danger creates conflict.

Beyond this reductive representation of Christianity, which also exists in other movie genres, horror's sometimes gratuitous violence and explicit intent to invoke fear also influences Christians against watching horror films. This perspective of horror glosses over the many subgenres of horror available, as well as the purpose of depictions of violence, sexuality or other stigmatized themes in film. I believe the main issue with many Christians' issues

concerning horror movies is their failure to criticize other movie genres for problematic elements in the same way that they target horror.

The horror genre historically relies heavily on violence against women as plot filler and shock value in order to draw in an audience who consumes that violence eagerly. It also plays with many religious motifs, a dubious choice if the religion targeted is marginalized.

However, I believe that when movies deal with how someone's deep investment in the Christian church is associated with the detriment of others, such as in Orphan (2009), the criticism is fair. Religion in horror movies is often used as a scare tactic because with the employment of religious elements also comes the baggage of religious violence against others. Contrastingly, much horror also serves as religious propaganda, with films such as The Conjuring series (2013 - 2018) and The Exorcist (1973) highlighting Christianity as the only way to combat supernatural powers.

As problematic elements exist in all films, I don't believe there is a cut and dry rule for what types of

media Christians should and should not partake in, and that to establish one would be condescending at best. The idea that in a spiritual warfare for our souls, watching horror movies will further put us at risk seems simplistic. All films are a reflection of the culture we live in and reveal deeply seated issues of power structure, violence and oppression of marginalized people, and how we all participate in a network of interaction subverting or entrenching hegemonic ideologies.

Romantic comedies carry troubling implications for how women should approach and be treated in relationships, the boundaries we can set and how men and women particularly interact "naturally"—and often end up portraying abusive or misogynistic romances as positive relationships. Science fiction films also struggle with meaningful representations of women when compared to their male counterparts. Action movies often represent marginalized people as harmful stereotypes, influencing real-life treatment of those individuals, and glorifying violence. Modern fantasy often presents dragons, wiz-

ards, and other instances of questionable spirituality. I would argue that horror films are no more or less harmful than any other type of movie.

Horror persists as a constantly evolving genre precisely because it is relatable to the human condition, providing a unique and often satirized lens into the downfalls of human nature. Horror movies claim a formative role in our society's building blocks, positing subversive ideas about power structures and authority in the same way as other movies lauded for their intellectualism, yet receiving little comparative acclaim. The fact is, all movies participate in social structures further oppressing disenfranchised people, and it is our choice whether to view them with a critical mind or to shut ourselves off from all criticism—especially of groups we identify with.

Your Average Political Joe

Ingrid Radulescu |

This past Tuesday, I had the honor and privilege of seeing Joe Biden, the 47th Vice President of the United States. When the day finally arrived, I pushed myself to garner excitement, thinking of the jealousy my Instagram story would produce. But instead I found a growing annoyance that this would take away crucial study time for the exam I had the next day. This would be the highest government official I have ever had a chance to see in person, so why wasn't I gushing with enthusiasm?

Last semester I completed an internship in Washington, D.C. I simply attributed my boredom

to "being over" political celebrities and their generic political rhetoric. I spent four months brushing shoulders with various political superstars. Basically, I'd been there, done that (flips hair). Yet I still couldn't pinpoint why I wasn't as overly enthusiastic as I should have been and pushed away the small voice in the back of my mind. Later that evening I told my friends the thoughts that I was afraid to say out loud. During Vice President Joe Biden's speech, I was thinking to myself, "Oh great, another older white male explaining the difficulties he overcame to achieve success".

There, I said it. Obvi-

ously, I mean no disrespect towards the former VP, nor am I dismissing his noble work and achievements. However, there was a drastic difference in my level of excitement when I went to see Madeline Albright, the former Secretary of State for Bill Clinton, speak in D.C. I felt an unreal surge of excitement and anxiety. Why? Because I saw myself in her. This moment replicated the feelings I had all throughout my experience in Washington. My prime struggle in D.C. was constantly seeing only one type of person presented and elevated, specifically older white males. I went to dozens of networking

events, speeches, seminars and book signings and the lack of representation drained me. My white eastern European immigrant father would argue that he had no choice in his being an older white male. Fair enough. But that's not my point.

My point is that representation matters. Nothing against Joe Biden, who I do appreciate and respect, but if you haven't noticed with the midterm elections, there is a battle for political representation. If the USA has a female population of 51%, shouldn't our Congress, White House and Supreme Court mirror that? If our population includes minorities,

shouldn't their voices be heard at the highest level of government? I believe so! Despite it all, voter suppression and racist political schemes seem to triumph in this election season acting as forces against diverse congressional representation. All I am saying is that it would be a breath of fresh air to see more than your average political joe in congress this midterm election.

The Last Word



Alexi
Decker
Editor-in-Chief

Speaking From The Church Margins

Just after the General Conference vote against women's ordination in 2015, I remember getting the news at the summer camp that I worked at. After evening campfire, my director gathered us staff members around in a circle. The mood was somber, more downcast than usual, as firelight played on disheartened faces, darkness just outside the edges of our little group. Exhaustion was typical—these low spirits were not. When Pastor Dave asked for prayer requests, someone said that they wanted to pray for the church. A murmur of agreement went around.

My favorite thing about camp had always been the unity—the way I'd felt closer to God and my Adventist church family than ever before, despite our isolated position on the steps of Mount Rainier. But in that moment, with nothing but the stars above and the woods around, I felt like we were utterly alone, abandoned by Adventism and the world church. In that moment it was just my summer camp, and I looked around at the other women and girls who made up our staff and felt very tired.

Two weeks ago the General Conference took another vote—this time on whether or not to accept a “compliance document” that, among other things, allows the General Conference to discipline conferences that have not implemented certain church policies or voted

actions. The vote passed, which means that they can now punish conferences that ordain women or put women in positions that only an “ordained minister” is supposed to hold. It's not, of course, limited to issues of women's ordination; any controversial issue in the church will do, including the treatment of LGBTQ members or the teaching of a range of ideas about the earth's creation in Adventist universities and schools. But women's ordination is the catalyst.

I feel the same way that I felt three years ago—utterly alone, and very tired.

The Adventist church has, in many ways, made me the person I am. My love for stories and literature can be traced back to Sabbath School felt boards, my compassion for the downtrodden and oppressed to mission trips and missionary years, my passion for justice to Old Testament Bible studies. I was forged in a church with a long history of resistance to power and the uplifting of the marginalized—one that followed in Christ's footsteps no matter what the world said. We spoke against slavery in the 1860s, tirelessly advocated for religious freedom, smuggled French Jews into Switzerland during the Holocaust, sent relief and aid to countless disaster zones. I love this church so much.

But I don't see my church resisting that power anymore. We aren't talking back to the government as they take children away from their families, we

aren't arguing with the White House as they remove protection for transgender people, we aren't advocating for victims of sexual assault as Kavanaugh rises to the Supreme Court.

We aren't doing that on the nationwide stage, and we aren't doing that in our own denomination. The Adventist church still has regional conferences, over fifty years after the civil rights movement. We judge people's spiritual potential based on their gender, and don't even get me started about the ways we actively drive away the LGBTQ community.

Jesus did none of those things.

Jesus brought people together. He advocated for Samaritans, let women lead the way to his tomb, ate with those society called untouchable. But that's not all he did. We forget, sometimes, that Jesus was a fighter. In the temple, he destroyed the power structures of his day, sent money changers careening down the steps. He was loving and gentle and kind, yes, but he was also filled with righteous anger and passion and fury.

This is also the Jesus whose footsteps we must follow.

The actions of my church over the last few years make me wonder if maybe we've lost our way, if we've grown too complacent in our culture and let the character of Christ fade like mist from before us. Lord knows it makes me want to run to the wilderness like Paul,

like Elijah, like Jesus and build my own community there, one that won't cast me out if I love someone who looks like me or divide my best friend and I based on the color of our skin or say that my spiritual gifts are not as valued as those of a man.

I've mentioned before that I love this church, that its teachings are woven into the fabric of my being, that I cannot imagine myself without it. All this is true.

But it's hard to love this church when it doesn't love me back. It's hard to have faith when this church doesn't have faith in me. And it's hard to be a part of this church when it doesn't let me be a part of it, but insists on leaving me in the margins, on the edges, without a place at the table.

I know there is a God who welcomed the marginalized, who knelt at the feet of his disciples and washed them, who made a community out of the poor and the broken. I look for him in the pews of this church and the halls of the seminary, but I don't always find him there. I catch glimpses of him, sometimes, in praise music and concerned friends and the underlined passages in my Bible, in firelight and downcast faces. Mostly, though, I find him kneeling at my feet, loving me even when his church does not.

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“I was forged in a church with a long history of resistance to power and the uplifting of the marginalized—one that followed in Christ's footsteps no matter what the world said.”